

## Thumb Region Watershed Center

Supports Healthy Communities



Friends of the St. Clair River is creating the Thumb Coast region's first **Watershed Center** as the tangible hub to elevate environmental priorities for the Blue Water Area.

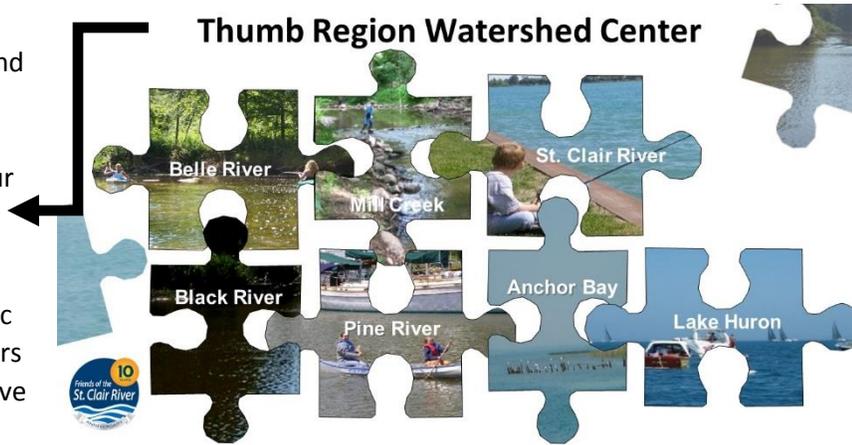
Shoreline development projects are relying on our county's natural assets, which points to the fact that now is the time we create a regional **Watershed Center** to balance community vibrancy with environmental responsibility. These are *complimentary, not competing* interests.

The **Watershed Center** will be highly visible, publicly accessible, and headquartered in a vibrant downtown along the heart of the St. Clair River.

Watersheds are the jigsaw pieces that make up our water and landscape. Each of our seven watersheds are primed as recreational destinations and with development pivoting to face our water, championing the health and aesthetics of our watersheds is critical, now more than ever.

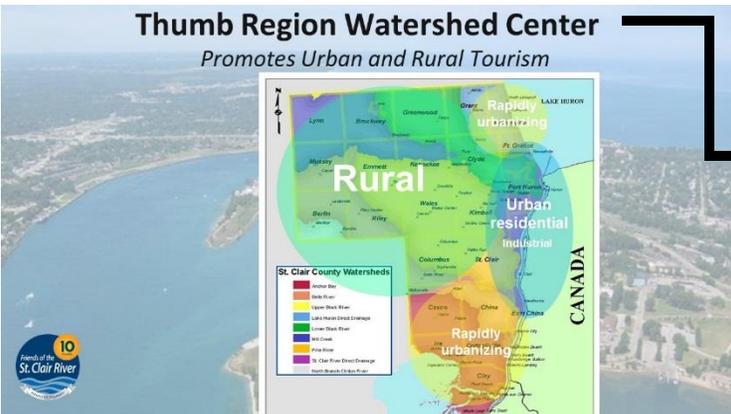
A study by Grand Valley State University showed the Huron River in Ann Arbor generated \$53 million in annual economic output. This proves there is real value for us to invest in rivers because healthy watersheds make our communities attractive places to live and work.

## Thumb Region Watershed Center



## Thumb Region Watershed Center

Promotes Urban and Rural Tourism



Environmental restoration projects can produce economic benefits, like we've seen with the \$21 million in federal funding for the Blue Water River Walk and Wetland County Park. According to a 2018 Great Lakes Commission study, the return on investment for water restoration projects, like these, is 3:1.

A **Watershed Center** will be the common ground where we come together to shape the type of communities that bring tourists, boost property values, and attract talented workers.

The value of a **Watershed Center** will be measured by its economic impacts and our community's health and wellness.

There are already 30 watershed centers around the state in place protecting, enhancing, and promoting their region's natural amenities and qualities. A Thumb Coast **Watershed Center** will capitalize on the momentum of our important work.

It's time for us to elevate the Blue Water Area's environmental legacy with our region's first **Watershed Center**.

## Thumb Region Watershed Center

Essential to our Quality of Life

